

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

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AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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TAGS: SF, PINT

SUBJ: VORSTER ANNOUNCES CABINET CHANGES

REF: 75 PRETORIA 4507

1. SUMMARY: ON EVE OF PARLIAMENT'S OPENING PRIME MINISTER VORSTER HAS ANNOUNCED CABINET RESHUFFLE. POWERFUL CABINET INNER CIRCLE SURROUNDING VORSTER RETAIN PORTFOLIOS. OTHER APPOINTMENTS DO NOT FORECAST REDIRECTION OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES. ALTHOUGH INCREASED RESPONSIBILITIES ARE BEING GIVEN TO TWO RELATIVE "LIBERALS", PIET KOORNHOF AND S.P. BOTHA, INTRODUCTION OF ARCHCONSERVATIVE DR. ANDRIES TREURNICHT INTO SENSITIVE POSITION AS DEPUTY MINISTER OF BANTU ADMINISTRATION AND EDUCATION IS SEEN AS OBVIOUS VORSTER BOW TO PARTY'S RIGHT WING. END SUMMARY.

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

2. TAKING ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITY OFFERED BY RESIGNATIONS
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OF MINISTER OF LABOR AND OF POST AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

VILJOEN TO BECOME PRESIDENT OF SENATE, AND MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DUPLESSIS TO HEAD WHITE DELEGATION AT SWA CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS, PRIME MINISTER VORSTER HAS ANNOUNCED CHANGES IN CABINET ON EVE OF OPENING OF PARLIAMENTARY SESSION. VORSTER HAS ALSO RECOMBINED CERTAIN PORTFOLIOS.

3. ACCORDING TO JAN. 22 CAPE ARGUS FOLLOWING ARE CHANGES ANNOUNCED SAME MORNING:

"THE SPEAKER OF THE ASSEMBLY, MR. A.L. SCHLEBUSCH, HAS BEEN APPOINTED MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND IMMIGRATION.

"MR. J.J. LOOTS, THE MINISTER OF PLANNING, THE ENVIRONMENT AND STATISTICS, LEAVES THE CABINET. HE IS TO BECOME THE NEW SPEAKER.

"MR. H.H. SMIT, THE PRESENT DEPUTY MINISTER OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND PENSIONS AND OF COLOURED, REHOBOTH AND NAMA RELATIONS, HAS BEEN PROMOTED TO MINISTER OF COLOURED AFFAIRS.

"HE TAKE THE PLACE OF DR. S.W. VAN DER MERWE, THE PRESENT MINISTER, WHO RETAINS HIS HEALTH PORTFOLIO AND IN ADDITION GETS PLANNING AND THE ENVIRONMENT AND STATISTICS.

"MR. T.N.H. JANSON HAS BEEN RELIEVED OF HIS POST AS DEPUTY MINISTER OF BANTU ADMINISTRATION AND EDUCATION AND DR. A.P. TREURNICHT, MP FOR WATERBERG, HAS BEEN APPOINTED IN HIS PLACE.

"MR. JANSON BECOMES DEPUTY MINISTER OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND PENSIONS AND PLANNING AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

"MR. A.J. RAUBENHEIMER, DEPUTY MINISTER OF BANTA DEVELOPMENT, HAS BEEN MADE MINISTER OF WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY.

"DR. F. HARTZENBERG, MP FOR LICHTENBURG, BECOMES DEPUTY MINISTER OF BANTU DEVELOPMENT.

"MR. S.P. BOTHA, THE PRESENT MINISTER OF WATER AFFAIRS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BECOMES MINISTER OF LABOUR AND MINES.

"DR. P.G.J. KOORNHOF RETAINS THE PORTFOLIO OF SPORT AND RECREATION AND IN ADDITION HE HAS BEEN GIVEN THE NATIONAL EDUCATION PORTFOLIO.

"THE PRESENT MINISTER, SENATOR J.P. VAN DER SPUY, RETAINS SOCIAL WELFARE AND PENSIONS AND BECOMES MINISTER OF POSTS

AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS AS WELL.

"MR. S.J.M. STEYN BECOMES MINISTER OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
IN ADDITION TO INDIAN AFFAIRS AND TOURISM."

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4. COMMENT: CABINET APPOINTMENTS DO NOT ADUMBRATE MAJOR
CHANGES IN GOVERNMENT POLICIES. HARD CORE OF IMPORTANT
DECISION MAKERS LED BY PRIME MINISTER VORSTER AND HIS
CLOSEST COLLEAGUES, FONMIN MULLER, MINDEF P.W. BOTHA,
MININTERIOR MULDER AND MINBANTU AFFAIRS M.C. BOTHA, RETAIN
THEIR PORTFOLIOS AND FIRM GRIP ON LEVERS OF POWER. CABINET
SHUFFLE CONTAINS ELEMENTS TO HEARTEN ALL FACTORS OF NATIONAL
PARTY (NP). ADDITIONAL DUTIES FOR RELATIVE "LIBERALS" (WITHIN
NP CONTEXT) PIET KOORNHOF AND S.P. BOTHA ARE BALANCED BY
INTRODUCTION OF ARCHCONSERVATIVE DR. ANDRIES TREURNICHT INTO
CABINET. TREURNICHT'S NOMINATION SERVES PURPOSE OF ALLAYING
FEARS OF PARTY'S RIGHTWING AND REWARDING HIM FOR LOYALLY
STANDING WITH PARTY WHEN MANY OF HIS SUPPORTERS URGED HIM TO
JOIN FAR RIGHT WING HNP. TREURNICHT REGARDED BY MANY OBSERVERS
AS HAVING ONE OF FINEST MINDS IN PARLIAMENT. PLACING HIM
IN EXTREMELY SENSITIVE BANTU AFFAIRS DEPUTY MINISTERSHIP BODES
LITTLE HOPE FOR FUNDAMENTAL OR EVEN MINOR CHANGES FOR THE
BETTER IN THAT MOST IMPORTANT OF AREAS.

5. POST WILL FORWARD COMPLETE LISTING CABINET MEMBERS AND
DEPUTY MINISTERS, FURTHER COMMENTARY AND BIO DATA ON NEW
FIGURES. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.
BOWDLER

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